



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE
BELFAST MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

No. 48.]

JULY 31, 1812.

[Vol. 9.

COMMUNICATIONS, ORIGINAL AND SELECTED.

For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

A DAY'S TOUR IN THE NORTH OF ENGLAND; BY T. WILKINSON.*

BEING on a visit to the worthy family of Captain Smith at Coniston, and enjoying the pleasure of a fine summer evening's ramble amid their delightful scenery, a sail on their beautiful lake was proposed for the next morning; my young female friends had learned the use of the oar, and they offered to row me down the lake: but having seen Langdale Pikes rising amid the clouds, I rather preferred visiting them. The proposal was readily agreed to, as the journey would be as new to them as to me.

My female companions rose at 3 in the morning, but it rained; however by six it cleared up. We soon collected, and, in the style of Queen Elizabeth, breakfasted on bread and beef. We made a hearty, but not a long meal, and with some provisions in our pockets, and our staffs in our hands, we departed, tripping along the road as light

heeled, and as light hearted as the Does of the mountains. Silver clouds were thinly scattered over the heavens, while their shadows beautifully chequered the earth: the chimnies of numerous white cottages were smoking in the vallies below, or on sundry little eminences around us: the peasants were going forth to their labour: the cattle, relieved of their milk, were returning to their pastures: the sun was warm: the air was still; while the lake of Coniston, reflecting the blooming landscapes, seemed lovely as a slumbering beauty. Through such scenery we proceeded, our minds exulting amidst the glories of nature, and glowing with benevolence. Our conversation was cheerful, and simply sentimental. Yet we sometimes journeyed on in silence, and in general I think ere more like a group of Indians than a party of French; but I suppose we were likeliest what we really were, a company of English. We had no servants behind us, or lap-dogs sporting around us; yet we were occasionally accompanied by a sociable butterfly, which winged her way before us, then perched on a pebble, till we came up, and then set off again.

Having ascended an eminence we made a halt to look both ways; and few stations, by turning on the heel, afforded so strong a contrast; if we looked back, we saw the lake of Coniston, with its bays and woody

A

* The account of this little pedestrian tour, written by Thomas Wilkinson, will be more interesting when it is known that the celebrated Elizabeth Smith and her sisters were his companions. Elizabeth Smith's "Fragments in Prose and Verse," and the account of her accomplishments, genius, and amiable disposition, are, doubtless, familiar to the recollection of most of the readers of the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

points, stretching a long way; if we looked forward, we had Raven Crag right before us, an immense assemblage of not very lofty mountains or rather of clustering crags, rugged and broken in the finest manner. We pursued our journey along its base, but our eyes were often turned to its summit, till at length we had left it in our rear, and other mountains offered themselves for our inspection, some of them of savage aspect, which to a stranger might suggest savage inhabitants, and portend danger; but here all was peace and pastoral tranquillity. Yet the tranquillity of these pastoral regions is often disturbed: the ear of the stranger is often startled by the blowing up of the slate rocks, while the tremendous echoes are thundered through the mountains.

We now descended into a valley, and traversed the level shores of Eller water. After various windings we passed a bridge, and entered Langdale. Here we paused in admiration of the objects before us, which formed a very noble scene for the pencil. In the foreground was a river foaming over a rugged channel; on the right was Langdale chapel, whose humble roof was scarce distinguished from a few scattered cottages that surrounded it, which, assimilated with the workings of slate, contrasted well with a beautiful woody eminence on the left. In the centre, in solemn majesty, rose a stupendous mountain, that bore on his frowning forehead the pikes of Langdale, which seemed like pillars to support the Heavens.

We pursued our route through the valley of Langdale, which we found more considerable than we supposed: yet we sometimes turned aside to explore the slate quarries, which, had it not been for the im-

plements of labour they contained, we would have hardly conceived to be the works of man, but rather huge caverns and grottos scraped out of the mountains by the hands of nature; in some places they rose in rugged and lofty arches, that almost excluded day-light; in others, with shaggy rifted perpendicular walls, that seemed like prodigious castles or dungeons with their roofs fallen in. Some of these immense caverns were of pale blue, the native colour of the unwrought rocks; over others that had been long left, time had thrown a reddish tint, which added to their solemnity.

As we passed along the road, rather elevated, and near a respectable looking house, a very sublime scene opened before us; beneath our feet lay the broad vale of Langdale, with its green fields, and scattered cottages, smoking amidst tufts of trees. On either hand, particularly on the east, far up the sides of lofty mountains, were beautiful enclosures; right before us rose the immense mountain before described, but much nearer, which seemed a termination to this part of the world, crowned with the pikes of Langdale, that shoot into the clouds. We entered a gate and sat down beneath some trees when these noble features of nature were delineated by my companions. We rose to pursue our journey, and were admiring the situation of the just mentioned house, when, to our utter surprize, not a glimpse of the mountain or the valley was to be seen. I feel respect for the hand that plants a tree, but to have raised such an impenetrable cloud of wood before such an interesting prospect, was among the tasteless occurrences of human actions that could hardly have been conceived.

Arrived at the foot of the mountain, I entered a cottage to inquire

concerning the ascent. I met with an aged woman, whose countenance was sorrowful, and she little noticed my inquiries. I advanced a little farther, and saw in the parlour an old man propped up in bed, pale and languid, and breathing with great difficulty, with some persons standing beside him.* I conceived him to be her dying husband. Alas! at that moment how different were

his views and ours; yet, the moment at which he was arrived, will as assuredly arrive to us! I retired, sorry at the intrusion.

We now began to ascend. Juliet and I traversed the surface of the mountain; her sisters ascended in a straight direction; but on our recommendation, they adopted our plan, and certainly the waving walk was easiest and best. We sometimes turned round, to survey the sinking vales, and diminished objects beneath us, and found, that objects which appeared great when we were among them, were, from the point we surveyed them, now dwindled into mere nothing; while rocks and points of mountains that were scarce discernible from the plains, were now grown into mighty and overwhelming masses.

The time was now approaching when we were to make our election what peak was to be visited in preference to the others. But, while we were thus debating, and slowly ascending, we found, on our right, a great body of water, lodged in the bosom of the mountain; its surface was calm, and reflected the dark and lowering crags which seemed to be the base of the western pyramid. With this impenetrable bar on our right, we turned to the left, and kept still ascending, till we came to the foot of another prodigious rock, which we deemed the base of the middle pike. The summit of the stupendous mountain we had ascended is crowned with these lofty pikes, all composed of perpendicular and terrific rocks, frowning with dreadful majesty; seen from the vallies below, they appear to rise at no great distance from each

* COTTAGE SORROW.

Where towering cliffs o'er Langdale
frown'd,

A cottage I drew near;
I simply entered, but I found
That all was sadness there.

The owner he was going fast
The way we all must go:
The pleasant hours of life were past
His partner used to know.

Yet faithful to her maiden choice,
Beside his bed she kept,
And if he rais'd his feeble voice,
No more his Sarah slept.

She loved him as the lightsome day,
He took her to his side,
When circled by her maidens gay
She tript, a youthful bride.

She thought her of his love so true,
His actions passing kind,
Such as from none but him she knew,
Or ever more will find.

She sat her down upon the bed,
And kiss'd her poor old man:
She on the pillow turn'd his head,
And wiped his visage wan.

For sweat-drops in his wrinkles stood:
His lips were parch'd and dry;
And when she kindly talk'd of food
He answered with a sigh:—

“My loving wife, I cannot eat,
My end is drawing near;
The room grows dark;—cold are my feet—
My children, are you there?”

Be good and humble, live in love;
Be to your mother kind;
Thus, if you please the Lord above,
You will his favour find.”

He ceased—and standing round the floor,
They hung their heads and wept;—
Again I sought the cottage door,
And through it softly crept. T.W.

other; but when the mountain is ascended, the traveller may toil with many a weary step, ere his labours reach from one to the other; and may look with alarm on many a frightful precipice, ere he ascend to the summit of this terrific pinnacle. That to the North-West seems the lowest, but most regular and conical; that to the south is next in elevation, but more broken and rugged; that to the east overlooks the rest; and indeed all these mountainous regions rise in masses of immense rocks, that are beheld with horror, and whose forms cannot be ascertained: beheld at a distance, the eye shapes them into somewhat regular forms, but exploring thus their tremendous recesses, the traveller is alarmed and bewildered. To these sublime and dreadful regions I ascended with my intrepid companions, and was the first to express any thing like fear. Kitty, who feels a kindness for the whole creation, offered me her hand; while Elizabeth, with a courage I had never met with before, proposed to explore what remained, and winding round the corner of a rock, presently ascended out of sight. I have felt pain from the absence of those I love; the absence of Elizabeth was terribly extended, and was accompanied with feelings of distress. From some situations, at a great distance, Langdale Pikes had appeared like prodigious pillars. I was suddenly impressed with an idea as if we were high up on one of the sides of these pillars, and in danger of slipping down. Under these impressions Elizabeth's absence was a period of dreadful suspense. I knew not whether she might be clambering up the cliffs above us, or falling down the precipices below. Her sisters too began to think her long in returning; but we were at length relieved by her calling to us from the cliffs over

head. In her descent she missed her way, and got on the shelf of rocks higher than that on which we sat; however, we soon got all together again, and joyfully eat our dinner amid these ærial halls of nature, and perhaps were the first party that had dined there in the present century.

Who is there that need be discouraged at practicable prospects and undertakings? For between ten and twenty years I had projected an expedition to this Alpine mountain, and this day it was accomplished; but who would have conceived that I should be led on by such amiable conductors!

The clouds were now collecting in the south, which hastened our descent down the mountain; yet the threatened rain did not prevent our visiting the waterfall in Dringeeon Gill, where, in a fissure of the mountain, and inclosed by gloomy rocks, a considerable stream is discovered tumbling from a lofty precipice into a deep and dark bason; near the summit of and over this cataract, a natural bridge is elegantly suspended; from the tremendous wall of rock, two lofty and pointed rocks project, between which an enormous mass of the same, in the form of a wedge, has found its way, and completes this sublime arch, which the stranger surveys with admiration, and shudders at the idea of passing.*

When we arrived in the valley, we turned to the high end of Langdale, and beheld it surrounded with

* It is a spot which you may see,
If ever you to Langdale go;
Into a chasm a mighty block
Hath fallen, and made a bridge of
rock.
The gulf is deep below;
And in a bason, black and small,
Receives a lofty waterfall.

WORDSWORTH.

a magnificent assemblage of mountains, towering among the mists, and magnified by the rain. We returned through Little Langdale; through Yew-dale, with its venerable yew-trees; and through the delightful valley of Thilberthwaite, with its hundred woody knowls. The rain was now pouring down upon us, and the brooks were rising as we passed along; the scenes must have been beautiful, and we must have had a disposition for enjoying them, when, drenched as we were with rain, we were still pleased and interested. If hedges or rivulets crossed our way, and I lamented our difficulties, there was never any thing worse than a smile on the part of my companions. The walls were climbed, and the rivulets were waded; and after being eleven hours on our feet, and walking between 20 and 30 miles, we arrived at home in safety. Our return was crowned with no light felicity, in seeing Captain Smith again amongst his family, as in the morning it was not certain but he might be gone with his regiment to Egypt.

For the Belfast Monthly Magazine,

ON THE ROUND TOWERS OF IRELAND.

THERE are no buildings in this kingdom, perhaps in Europe, that have caused so much discussion as the Round Towers of this country; for as there are no literary memorials of the exact time of their erection, nor by whom, conjecture has been nearly exhausted in the inquiries concerning them.

Though history is silent as to the age of their erection, founders, or use; yet the minute researches of Antiquarians leave little room to doubt of their having been erected by the Danes for belfries; which opinion, respecting their use, is con-

firmed by their shape, for though they differ in many respects, yet all have four apertures near the top, answering to the cardinal points, evidently to let out the sound.

The tower of Ardmore, in the Co. of Waterford, fully confirms the opinion, that they were belfries; for near the top, inside, are still three pieces of oak, evidently for hanging a bell. There are also two channels cut in the cill of the door, where the rope may be supposed to have come out, the ringer standing outside. This tower is well built of hewn stone, which leads to the conjecture, that its erection is much later than some have imagined; and in the Round Tower at Roscrea, thirty feet from the ground, is a window with a pointed arch, which reduces its date at least to the twelfth century, as such arches were not used in buildings prior to that time.

If such plain facts respecting the time of their erection and use, required any confirmation, it receives it from Giraldus Cambrensis, who came over to this country with King John, and is the first author who notices them. He calls them *Turres Ecclesiasticas*, Ecclesiastical Towers; a name from which we may fairly infer their use at that time: and an author, highly distinguished for his knowledge in Irish antiquities, supposes, with some probability, that Giraldus Cambrensis even saw them while they were building.

Their shape is believed, and perhaps justly, to be taken from the monumental stones and obelisks, anciently used by the Pagan inhabitants; for history demonstrates, that it is no easy matter to eradicate a system, especially one that had continued so long as the Pagan.

The present age is certainly not a little fruitful in theories, of which the Round Towers come in for a sufficient share. Dr. Milner, and